



JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
BUDGET VIRTUAL MEETING
MAY 21, 2020
MINUTES

Call to Order – Chairman Etheridge called the meeting to order at approximately 9:02 A.M in order to enter into Executive Session.

Officials Present: Chairman Henry Etheridge, Vice Chairwoman Barbara B. Clark, Councilman D. Thomas Johnson, Councilman Dr. Curtis Brantley

Staff Present: County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Acting Clerk to Council Tisha L. Williams, County Attorney David Tedder, Administrative Services Director Kimberly Burgess, Emergency Services Director Frank Edwards, Engineering Services Director Dale Terry

Invocation given by Vice Chairwoman Clark

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Johnson

Chairman Etheridge performed Roll Call of All Council Members and Staff Members that are Present.

Discussion of Budget

Chairman Etheridge asked Mr. Fulghum to open the discussion pertaining to the budget. Mr. Fulghum stated that he would like to acknowledge a difference this year and that the prepared materials have been sent to the Council prior to today's Budget Workshop. Mr. Fulghum stated that he usually prepares a Memo of the budget each year that gives a very broad explanation of the Budget along with the actual Budget Ordinance. The third item that Council was provided was the Budget Worksheet that shows all the details of the Budget and the final items would be the notes from Ms. Burgess regarding the particulars of the budget which gives a deeper understanding of the budget adding that both he and Ms. Burgess would be happy to answer any questions Council may have. Councilman Brantley stated that Mr. Fulghum referenced a document with pages 1-4 adding that he does not have it. Mr. Fulghum asked the Acting Clerk to Council Ms. Williams if she could send Councilman Brantley the documents, in which Ms. Williams stated that she would send it to Councilman Brantley again. Mr. Fulghum advised Councilman Brantley to keep a look out on his email for the document Ms. Williams would be sending. Ms. Burgess came before Council to share her budget Memo/notes.

Ms. Burgess began with the Operating Budget as it is \$30,530,100 which is \$674,275.00 less than last year. The Revenue/Property Taxes are anticipated to increase \$1,140,000 over last year and are merely due to 8% growth in the property values and last year. The County did not include any anticipated new growth for the Fiscal year 2021 in the Budget and the millage rate remains at 154. The County is legally permitted to raise the millage rate by 4.99%, or seven mills, each additional mil would provide \$145,766 in additional revenue and the entire seven would yield \$1,020,362. The Local Option sales Tax, which is estimated at \$3,600,000 which is \$100,000 less than last year. However, the credit will remain the same at \$2,700,000 and the credit factor will remain the same as well. The Fee and Lieu Revenue is \$500,00 greater than last

year and that's based on actual receipts and the State aid to Local Government are expected to remain the same which is \$1,030,000. The County did reduce elastic revenues, business licenses, planning and permit fees, park and recreation fees by 20% over the actual year to date numbers received, based on the closures due to COVID-19. The Economic Development funds are slightly less than last year and there's detail listed before Council as to what they include. The County \$5,000 share for the Robertsville and Grays Restrooms, Sherwood Tract and asbestos abatement. The County has an annual payment to the South Carolina regional alliance, and an airport generator grant match as well. Cash cart tariff was considerably more from last year as it was \$2.6 Million as of now it is \$120,000 and that is based on the amount SLED recommended in the IT Department and the County Approved that in January, however those funds have not been forwarded over as of yet to carry over. Ms. Burgess asked if there was any questions, Councilman Brantley asked what does all other revenues include? Ms. Burgess inquired what exactly Councilman Brantley was pertaining to? Ms. Burgess noticed that Councilman Brantley was mentioning the Ordinance. Mr. Fulghum answered stated that it includes fees, etc. Ms. Burgess proceeded to speak about expenses and one of the largest lines were the Employee and Personnel cost, for the year 2021 the total personnel cost which includes salary and wages benefits, over time \$18,686,500 versus \$18,193,470 for the prior year which is a difference of \$493,000 which includes \$144,400 for new personnel cost, in which some of those personnel cost includes the addition of a Network Administrator for the I.T Department which offsets the \$120,000 carry forward.

The transition from a part-time to a full time position for Tax Collector and the addition of three Lieutenants to the Marsh Cove Fire Station which is anticipated that they would be hired sometime in the fourth quarter of next year. Total Salary Wage increase \$247,000 primarily is the result of full year salaries for open positions that were eliminated in this fiscal year and the County had an increase in over-time of \$79,000, which reflects the actual amounts incurred this year. There was not an increase in contribution percentages for the retirement benefit however it did increase slightly which was 3.2% primarily due to open positions were filled during the fiscal year and they are having contributions made on their behalf to the retirement fund. Workers Compensations increased 14% over this current year, medical insurance decreased 6% or about \$130,000 even though there is anticipated premium increase which is minimal at .033% and this is due research of the projected actuals and the decision to budget on the projected actual amount. Ms. Burgess also stated that the overall benefits increased \$2,8350.00. Chairman Etheridge asked Ms. Burgess to verify if the amount of said income increase, was in last year's budget for those positions, Ms. Burgess inquired if the Chairman meant the "Salary and Wages" of which Chairman Etheridge replied yes. Ms. Burgess explained that they were hired last year in mid-June some time last year and that's why there's a bit of an increase in the budget at this time, in other words, they were not hired on the first day of the budget. Concerning the Fire and Dispatch Contracts, Ms. Burgess stated that the County has two, the Levy Fire and the Town of Ridgeland and they are in alignment with the current agreement which is \$286,00 for Levy and \$205,000 for the Town of Ridgeland. The current contract for Levy is \$255,000 plus the amount for workers compensation and the Dispatcher salary reimbursement agreement that the County has with the Town of Ridgeland and the City of Hardeeville has been reduced to \$15,000 in order to provide financial aid to the municipalities to transition to the new Emergency Records Management software, and the \$15,000 amount will be reduced for the next three years.

Ms. Burgess stated that there are some new Budget items, such as the new Marsh Cove Fire Station as well as some associated interest estimated at about \$19,000 for the Construction Loan and the loan amount is \$1,177,380 and the annual lease purchase payment to Motorola Spillman and it is \$282,400 as it is for the Computer assisted dispatch and the emergency records management software which hopefully will be in operation April or May 2021. Ms. Burgess stated that the Morris Center budget request was put into the

Agency Appropriations section, adding that in previous year they had been included and provided for the Accommodations Tax Revenue. Ms. Burgess inquired if Council had any questions about this section of information. No one had any comments at this time. Ms. Burgess proceeded with the State Mandates adding that they are net \$7,297,900 and that is net the \$1,030,000 that the County receives for Local Government and it is approximately 24% of the total budgeted expenditures. Ms. Burgess also displayed to Council the current Capital Outlay list adding that the Capital request was removed from the budget this year and the only one that remains present and budgeted for annually are the waste containers and the compactors for the transfer stations. Ms. Burgess also mentioned that the other item that's listed is the Fleet Replacement both the County and the Sherriff. Ms. Burgess concluded on her notes of the Budget and opened the floor for discussion.

Chairman Etheridge stated that somehow connection dropped on his end and that he "missed most" of her presentation, adding that he will convene with her later as he does have some questions. Chairman Etheridge asked Council if they had any questions pertaining to what Ms. Burgess went over. Councilman Brantley requested a hard copy of the entire budget information that she went over, as Chairman Etheridge echoed the same request. Chairman Etheridge stated that a second workshop would be needed and asked Ms. Burgess pertaining to Emergency Services and some other departments regarding Worker's Compensation adding that each department is showing a payment for workers compensation and inquired if the County was paying an additional \$440,000? Ms. Burgess stated that amount Chairman Etheridge mentioned for Medical Insurance is paid on behalf of retirees, those who have retired from the County. Chairman Etheridge inquired if this amount is being paid for retirees now? Ms. Burgess responded yes it was correct. Chairman Etheridge asked Councilman Brantley if he had any questions pertaining to the Budge and Councilman Brantley stated that his only request was for a hard copy of the Budget. Chairman Etheridge asked Councilman Johnson if he had any questions regarding the budget and Councilman Johnson responded that he did not at the moment. Mr. Fulghum advised the Chairman that he could have Ms. Burgess go over the section for Elected Officials. Ms. Burgess stated that she did not receive any response from Elected Official regarding the submittal of their budget request adding that a lot of the budget amounts listed there are the same as it was the year prior. Ms. Burgess advised that after she forwarded Council their budget packet, the Magistrate's Office had some difficulty getting the budget entered adding that there were a couple of requests from them relating to security for their office which was not added in the budget yet. Ms. Burgess stated that eh Sherriff Office submitted a budget request of the same amount from last year.

Ms. Burgess stated that she did receive a response from the Clerk of Court and her response was added in the budget. Mr. Fulghum advised the Chairman that all Elected Officials were contacted separately regarding this budget meeting as well as the meeting was advertised so they could watch it and if they wanted to comment or present something to Council, staff would advise Council. Chairman Etheridge stated that he felt like the Workshop was "immature" from the time Council had to look over the budget and Council hasn't discussed the budget amongst the Council and Staff, adding that the information received is good. Mr. Fulghum advised the Chairman that the workshop was the whole point of going over the information with Council and would check with Council if they would like that information digitally or via paper. Mr. Fulghum also advised that the entire Capital list wasn't verbally discussed in this portion of the workshop, however Council does have the entire list that they can read over. Mr. Fulghum stated that he is very pleased that Ms. Burgess was able to reduce the cash carry portion of the budget as Council knows that it has been a "pet peeve" of his for several years. Mr. Fulghum also added that the base of the budge a lot with the reductions he feels really good about. Mr. Fulghum advised Council that he's happy to answer any questions that Council may have. Councilman Brantley asked Mr. Fulghum in terms of the

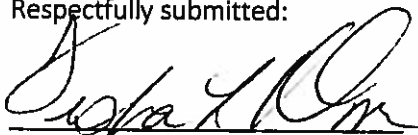
capital operation budget if the bottom-line amount is \$32,000,000. Mr. Fulghum advised that was correct and encouraged Council to look at the list of the number of capital items. Mr. Fulghum also reminded Council that they previously authorized a Salary Study and the salary study is nearing completion and salary increases will not be able to be implemented this year but hopefully Council will consider for next year once the study information has been received. Chairman Etheridge inquired from Vice Chairwoman Clark if she had any questions and she responded she did not. Chairman Etheridge inquired of Councilman Brantley if he had any questions and Councilman Brantley stated that he hopes that Council would be able to get back together for another workshop to ask questions about the budget pertaining to the information received via the budget. Mr. Fulghum inquired if the Council would like to have another workshop and if they would like to pick a date now, also if in the future Council would like to receive information via email and/or physical document. Chairman Etheridge inquired of Councilman Johnson if he had any questions. Councilman Johnson inquired for clarity of the Clerk of Court submitted a proposed budget and if it was adopted. Ms. Burgess stated that her budget proposal has been incorporated into the budget. Councilman Johnson stated that it was good and that she has been underfunded for over the last thirty years that he knows of. Councilman Johnson also inquired from Ms. Burgess the definition to the term Cash card tariff is money and land budget that is not spent yet and Ms. Burgess stated that in this case it is. Chairman Etheridge stated that he feels like he's not ready for a budget adding that the County has had a trying year adding that he would like to have another budget workshop and would like to have all the documents. Chairman Etheridge asked if any other Councilmembers would like to have another budget workshop prior to the June 1, 2020 Council Meeting. Mr. Fulghum advised that staff is ready to respond however Council wants to whenever they need another meeting. Council settled on Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 5:00 PM. Vice Chairwoman asked Ms. Burgess to go over the millage rate for the school, and Ms. Burgess stated that the millage rate did not change as the School District had their meeting and they have requested it remain the same.

Adjourn

Councilman Brantley moves as Vice Chairwoman Clark seconds the Motion to adjourn. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting in favor. Meeting Adjourned

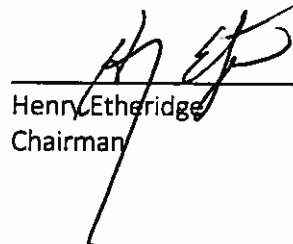
Meeting adjourned at 9:57 A.M.

Respectfully submitted:



Tisha L. Williams
Acting Clerk to Council

Approved:



Henry Etheridge
Chairman